

CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. A system for managing transactions with multiple affiliates each having an affiliate computer and an affiliate database connected thereto, which system includes:

a central exchange including an exchange server and an exchange database connected thereto;

a distributed network connecting said exchange server to said affiliate computers; and said distributed network being adapted for real-time transactions in the exchange database utilizing data housed in said affiliate databases.

2. The system according to claim 1, which includes:

Internet (world wide web) access and a web page including links to the affiliate computers for conducting such transactions electronically.

3. The system according to claim 2, which includes a web-based bulletin board accessible by the affiliates and adapted for posting information concerning goods and/or services available for purchase and/or requested to purchase through the central exchange.

4. The system according to claim 1 wherein said distributed network is adapted for enabling said affiliates to specify transaction conditions with respect to goods and/or services made available thereby for transactions with other said affiliates.

5. The system according to claim 1 wherein said distributed network is adapted for handling affiliate-to-affiliate transactions with respect to goods and/or services and for recording, reporting and storing data with respect to said transactions.

6. The system according to claim 2, which includes:
a website plug-in adapted for enabling said affiliates to create their respective web sites for conducting electronic commerce utilizing the central exchange and the distributed network.

7. The system according to claim 1, which includes:
a transaction accounting function adapted for automatic record insertion in said affiliates' computers.

8. The system according to claim 1, which includes:
a web inventory sharing function adapted for enabling said affiliates to upload their respective inventories of goods and/or services to the exchange for transactions with other affiliates pursuant to predetermined terms and conditions via the distributed network.

9. A system for managing transactions with multiple affiliates each having an affiliate computer and an affiliate database connected thereto, which system includes:

 a central exchange including an exchange server and an exchange database connected thereto;

 a distributed network connecting said exchange server to said affiliate computers; said distributed network being adapted for real-time transactions in the exchange database utilizing data housed in said affiliate databases;

 Internet (world wide web) access and a web page including links to the affiliate computers for connecting such transactions electronically;

 a web-based bulletin board accessible by the affiliates and adapted for posting information concerning goods and/or services available for purchase and/or requests to purchase through the central exchange;

 the distributed network being adapted for enabling said affiliates to specify transaction conditions with respect to goods and/or services made available thereby for transactions by other said affiliates;

 said distributed network being adapted for handling affiliate-to-affiliate transactions with respect to goods and/or services and for recording, reporting and storing data with respect to said transactions;

 a website plug-in adapted for enabling said affiliates to create their respective websites for connecting electronic commerce utilizing the central exchange and a distributed network;

a transaction accounting function adapted for automatic record insertion in said affiliates' computers; and

a web inventory sharing function adapted for enabling said affiliates to upload their respective inventories of goods and/or services to the exchange for transactions with other affiliates pursuant to predetermined terms and conditions via the distributed network.

10. The system according to claim 9, which includes:

multiple affiliate servers each associated with a respective affiliate computer; and each said affiliate computer being connected to a respective affiliate server; and each said affiliate server being connected to said exchange server via an affiliate application.

11. The system according to claim 9, which includes:

said website plug-in being adapted for affiliate customization of a web page header and footer; and

a default web page body including information provided by said central exchange for said affiliate web pages.

12. The system according to claim 9, which includes:

a rules set maintained by said central exchange and adapted for control by said affiliates whereby said affiliates can individually identify goods and/or services to be shown on their respective websites and the websites of other affiliates and said affiliates can specify conditions for selling such goods and/or services.

13. The system according to claim 9, which includes:

a shipping manager feature adapted for providing transaction data to a carrier for shipping goods to customers.

14. A method of managing transactions with multiple affiliates each having an affiliate computer and an affiliate database connected thereto, which method comprises the steps of:

providing a central exchange including an exchange server and an exchange database connected thereto;

storing in said exchange database information corresponding to goods and/or services available for sale and/or requested to purchase by one or more affiliates;

connecting said exchange server to the affiliate computers via a distributed network;

storing in said affiliate databases information corresponding to goods and/or services;

uploading to said central database said affiliate database information corresponding to goods and/or services available for transactions via the distributed network;

conducting real-time transactions involving said goods and/or services in said exchange database via said distributed network;

providing Internet (world wide web) access to said exchange server;

providing a web page and linking same to said affiliate computers;

providing a web-based bulletin board and access thereto by said affiliates;

posting to said web-based bulletin board information concerning goods and/or services available for purchase and/or requested to purchase through the central exchange;

preprogramming said central exchange with transaction conditions applicable to said affiliates and conducting transactions via said distributed network according to said preprogrammed conditions;

conducting affiliate-to-affiliate transactions with respect to said goods and/or services via said distributed network; and reporting data with respect to said affiliate-to-affiliate transactions to said central exchange.

15. The method according to claim 14, which includes the additional steps of: providing a special order system enabling affiliates to sell non-inventory goods and/or services not in their possession; and distributing via the distributed network purchase requests for said non-inventory goods and/ or services.

16. The method according to claim 14, which includes the additional steps of: enabling affiliate control of splitting of grouped goods and/or services according to predetermined procedures; and offering such grouped goods and/or services according to such predetermined procedures.

17. The method according to claim 14, which includes the additional steps of: enabling affiliate control of credit card purchasing of goods and/or services from other affiliates; and inputting to said central exchange credit card information from said affiliates for use in connection with affiliate-to-affiliate transactions.

18. The method according to claim 14, which includes the additional steps of:
sending an affiliate purchase request from a selling affiliate to said exchange server via a
web service;
said exchange server parsing and building request documents;
said exchange server sending said request back to said selling affiliate;
said originating affiliate sending goods and/or services information to said exchange server
concerning said request;
said exchange server sending selling information concerning said goods and/or services to
a buying affiliate;
said buying affiliate confirming purchase to said exchange service;
said exchange service sending a transaction confirmation to said buying affiliate; and
said buying affiliate sending a transaction confirmation to said exchange service.

19. The method according to claim 14 wherein said goods and/or services
comprise tickets to entertainment and/or sports events.

20. The method according to claim 14 wherein said tickets are specified for
purchase by a purchasing affiliate by event, venue, date and seating section.